548 In a center like Coquilhatville there are loose women who live in concubinage, first with one man and then another, a few days or weeks with this one, then the same length of time with that one; they are paid by each man but refuse to give up their freedom permanently. It is true that this city is outside the geographical limits of our study, but since it is located close to Nkundó territory and is important to them, I have touched on it briefly. No brothels are to be found there, and one does not encounter professional streetwalkers except for a few women who solicit among ship's crews. Most of the prostitutes in Coquilhatville are single girls or divorcées (legally or in fact). This disguised form of prostitution is not regulated here as it is in Leopoldville. (1) Nevertheless, the [77] government recognizes,

• [651]

1. In the capital all native women who are adult and able bodied and who theoretically are living alone are taxed 50 francs (the certificates of payment show, in addition to other information, the number, name and address of the person taxed). This tax is not the equivalent of a permit to engage in licentious behavior or libertinism. It is not called a "prostitution tax" or any equivalent name, but some Europeans call it that because it has that appearance.

In addition there is a real regulation concerning prostitution; it is the Governor General's order of November 5, 1913, which establishes cards and periodical sanitary examinations for prostitutes. It would seem to be applied in Matadi, Leopoldville, and Elisabethville.

at least in practice, the existence of a class of "free women" present in considerable numbers. Their way of life is contagious to such a degree that -- to an extent which varies greatly -- a noticeable number of girls who live with their parents but aspire to luxury have been seduced by it. (1)

1. According to the latest figures

595 x 831 And it is not difficult to understand this fact. For indeed polygamy constitutes a legitimate and easy means by which a man may enjoy several women without being bothered by palavers, difficulties, etc. The mentality of many men who care little about moral laws as well as the tendency of a disordered instinct to multiply its objects only confirm this observation. Often one sees men who were monogamists at first begin by taking a second wife out of passion. Then gradually their passion becomes greater rather than appeased, and so a harem is built up progressively.

595 x 178 The changes introduced by colonization in the economic life of this people have not resulted in a decrease of polygamy. In the absence of exact figures we must be satisfied with simple visual observations, but in certain regions one has the impression that the harems have become smaller but, on the other hand, that the number of polygamists has increased, and therefore [375] the desire for polygamy, that is, its affective cause, has [651] not diminished. Nor does the extra tax frighten or stop the polygamists. The great means for changing the Nkundó attitude in this realm will always be the action of the missions and the penetration of Christian ethics, seconded by a government attitude favoring monogamy. (1)

[648] 1. The favorable attitude of the colonial government toward monogamy is expressed chiefly in the permission given to a polygamist's extra wives to abandon their husband in order to contract a monogamous union, preferably in a mission, under the supervision of missionaries.

[177] Another means, undoubtedly secondary but still important, is the example of European couples. The Blacks are imitative, and native women envy the lot of the white woman, so that European households are propaganda for monogamy when they behave well.